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Letter dated 12 September 2014 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, has submitted to me the seventh annual report on the Alliance of Civilizations, highlighting the main activities carried out by the Alliance from July 2013 to June 2014 in accordance with the strategic review document for 2013-2018, adopted last year, as well as his own emerging ideas for the coming year and beyond.

As you know, the Alliance of Civilizations was established in 2005 under the auspices of the United Nations, at the request of the Governments of Spain and Turkey. Its activities are focused on helping to counter polarization and extremism by promoting tolerance and cultural diversity within and between societies, with the intent of contributing to the prevention of identity-based conflicts.

You will recall that, during 2013, the High Representative led an extensive internal and external review of the activities of the Alliance. This time of reflection and self-evaluation has led to a more focused set of activities. In a world increasingly marked by conflicts, even violence targeting vulnerable groups, the need for the work of the Alliance is greater than ever. I agree with the High Representative that promoting our shared values of humanity is an essential task of my office and of the United Nations.

The need to combat the roots of cultural tensions, as a means of preventing dangerous conflicts, is assuming greater importance throughout the United Nations system. This scourge can thwart our efforts to achieve the interlinked goals of promoting peace and security, sustainable development and human rights. The High Representative, having consolidated the process of identifying and executing projects internally, has now turned his attention to seeking out new approaches. He is actively pursuing opportunities to use arts, sports and entertainment as entry points for promoting the goals of the Alliance. He has continued to advance efforts by the Alliance to combine engagement with official entities and the expansion of its linkages to civil society. He has taken steps through his own engagement as well as that of the staff of the Alliance to highlight the importance of intercultural and interreligious dialogue processes as conflict prevention vehicles.

Please recycle

As was the case in 2013, I am pleased to learn that more partners are supporting the Alliance. I also hope that Member States of the Group of Friends of the Alliance will regularly support it to the fullest extent possible, including through contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund. Only through predictable and sufficient infusions of unrestricted contributions to the Trust Fund can the Alliance continue its important work.

I am grateful to the Government of Indonesia for its great support in hosting the Global Forum in August 2014, under the theme "Unity in diversity: celebrating diversity for common and shared values". My thanks go also to the Government of Qatar for hosting the preparatory conference for the Forum in April 2014.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present report to the attention of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

Alliance of Civilizations: seventh annual report of the High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations

Summary

The present report highlights the main activities carried out by the Alliance of Civilizations, under the leadership of the High Representative, from July 2013 to June 2014. These activities were developed in accordance with the strategic review document for 2013-2018, submitted to the Secretary-General in June 2013.

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I. Introduction

1. The Alliance of Civilizations, a political initiative of the Secretary-General, was launched in 2005 with the co-sponsorship of the Prime Ministers of Spain and Turkey. Jorge Sampaio, former President of Portugal, was appointed as the first High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations in May 2007. During his tenure, Mr. Sampaio developed a functional framework for action, an initial agenda for activities and a network of stakeholders.

2. In February 2013, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session and former Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, became the second High Representative. After assuming the post, President Al-Nasser prepared and submitted the strategic review document for 2013-2018 on the new vision for the Alliance, which was approved by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the Group of Friends in September 2013.

3. Since its inception and in accordance with the strategic review document for 2013-2018, the Alliance's work has been focused on four main fields of action, also known as "pillars": youth, education, media and migration. All Alliance activities, whether individual political interventions of the High Representative or project-based activities managed by the staff, promote tolerance and respect among human beings for their diverse beliefs, cultures and other sources of identity.

4. The Alliance seeks to advance shared humanistic values that contribute to a culture of peace among all civilizations. The Alliance recognizes that it cannot achieve its mission alone with a small staff. Therefore, it pursues its goals by empowering civil society and other non-State actors at the local level that share the Alliance's values and goals and undertake actions compatible with the work of the United Nations.

5. As in previous years, the Alliance continues to occupy its special place within the United Nations system. It is a key platform in the larger structure of the United Nations that actively works with Member States as well as international organizations, the media, youth, faith-based organizations and other civil society representatives.

6. This is the High Representative's seventh annual report to the Secretary-General. It highlights the main activities during the past year (July 2013 to June 2014).

II. Overview of progress

7. The Alliance has become a leading United Nations platform for intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation. It has connected Governments, international organizations, the media, youth, faith-based organizations, lawmakers, local authorities, civil society organizations and individuals devoted to promoting understanding across diverse communities. Through its resolution 64/14, the General Assembly expressed its support for the Alliance and acknowledged it as such a platform.

8. Over the past year, the High Representative provided leadership in expanding the network of relationships with Member States, regional and subregional

international organizations and other non-State actors. In many cases, these relationships were formalized through memorandums of understanding.

9. The High Representative has been particularly intent on expanding the size of the Group of Friends by inviting more Member States to join. The Group currently numbers 114 Member States and entities, and 25 international organizations.

10. As the High Representative indicated when he assumed office in February 2013, his overall objective is to build on the achievements of his predecessor. In that regard, the Alliance continued to promote the adoption by members of the Group of Friends of regional strategies and national plans that advance its goals.

11. Since the endorsement of the strategic review document for 2013-2018 at the ministerial meeting of the Group of Friends held in September 2013, the Alliance's programmatic activities have been reviewed and consolidated whenever their design and programme framework has allowed. Consolidation efforts represent an ongoing process and will continue beyond 2014. There has been a clear recognition of the crossover between the Alliance's core pillars of action and efforts to exploit the connections among those programmes. For example, the PLURAL+ festival reflected clear links among all fields of action: youth, media, education and migration. The summer schools combined two focus areas: education and youth. The summer schools, the Youth Solidarity Fund, PLURAL+ and the Media and Information Literacy initiative expanded and also received significant recognition from the international community. The same applies to Entrepreneurs for Social Change, the Intercultural Innovation Award and training events organized through media and migration programmes. The Alliance's alumni activities, especially those of the fellowship programme, were also expanded.

12. Starting in September 2013, staff members began the process of developing stronger, more disciplined project management measures. The High Representative encouraged efforts that included the promulgation of a new initiative review process, enhanced attention to monitoring and evaluation processes and greater attention to donor communication and coordination. Opportunities are now being pursued in order to ensure that staff members possess enhanced project management skills and tools.

13. With regard to funding, despite major efforts by the High Representative, neither the amounts nor the timing of replenishments to the Voluntary Trust Fund was adequate. Without a predictable and reliable replenishment mechanism, staff members were only offered extensions at three-month intervals. The development of an effective replenishment mechanism remains an important challenge for the Alliance, and efforts to deal with it are ongoing. The High Representative has approached the Group of Friends to encourage them to further support the Trust Fund, and the Secretary-General has communicated the same message. The High Representative and his team should be commended for their continued commitment to the mission of the Alliance in this difficult financial situation.

III. Consolidating the Alliance of Civilizations as a global multi-stakeholder platform

Advocacy and outreach by the High Representative

14. During the reporting period, the High Representative held bilateral consultations with both sponsors, Spain and Turkey, in addition to paying official visits to a number of States and international organizations, all members of the Group of Friends, during which the High Representative participated in major regional and international conferences and meetings. These meetings and field visits were focused mostly on Europe, Asia and the Middle East. At the same time, in order to explore prospects for cooperation with Africa and to encourage more African countries to join the Group, the Alliance started communications with the African Union and signed a memorandum of understanding with the African Union Commission.

15. The High Representative undertook an official visit to the Holy See from 25 to 27 March 2014, and conducted several bilateral meetings to discuss cooperation. The visit was encouraging and opened doors for more collaboration with the Holy See in the future.

16. During the reporting period, the High Representative established close linkages for partnership with the following institutions: the State Committee for Work with Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Azerbaijan); the Academy of Latinity (Brazil); the International Ecological Safety Collaborative Organization and Peking University (China); the Pio Manzù Centre (Italy); Education Above All, the Qatar Olympic Committee and Doha Goals (Qatar); the Civilizations Study Centre and the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Waqf University Alliance of Civilizations Institute (Turkey); the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies and Coventry University (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland); Fordham University and Fairleigh Dickinson University (United States of America); and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and other entities.

17. The High Representative contributed to a series of lectures, held at Helsinki University in September 2013, on the topic "The relevance of the Alliance of Civilizations to the Nordic countries and its implications". He took part in the Global Thinkers Forum, held in Athens in December 2013, presenting his reflection on global leadership. In celebration of the International Day of Francophonie, in March 2014, the Alliance led a round table in New York on cultural diplomacy and multilingualism. In May 2014, at the invitation of Coventry University, the High Representative delivered a statement entitled "Diversity matters: contemporary challenges for peaceful relations". Finally, in June 2014, he addressed the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.

Group of Friends and focal points

18. The members of the Group of Friends continue to provide guidance on key issues and strategic direction for the Alliance through bilateral consultations and group discussions. As of June 2014, the Group consisted of 139 members (114 countries and 25 international organizations). The Group met three times at the permanent representative level in New York, in February, April and June 2014. The

ministerial-level meeting, at which the Declaration on the Alliance of Civilizations was adopted, was held in New York in September 2013.

19. The members of the Group of Friends were invited to appoint focal points mandated to oversee implementation of the Alliance's objectives at the national level, notably through national plans, and to coordinate with the Secretariat. As at June 30, 2014, 86 countries and 23 international organizations had appointed their focal points.

20. The Alliance ensured coordination of its efforts and exchanges by organizing the focal points' annual meeting and preparatory conference for the sixth forum, held in April 2014 in Doha and hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar. The theme of the event was "Peace and prosperity for sustainable development", on which all participants were invited to reflect and share their feedback. During the focal points meeting, States and international organizations were briefed on the status of preparations for the Global Forum in Bali, Indonesia, and on the Alliance's project and programmes, and were provided the opportunity to report on their progress in implementing their regional and national plans. The focal points meeting concluded with an outcome document, the Doha Declaration, expressing the shared commitment of the focal points to support the Alliance, its core pillars of work and the additional priorities of the High Representative.

21. The High Representative aims to broaden the composition of the Group of Friends community by inviting those States that are not yet members to observe the Group's deliberations during Alliance events.

22. The Alliance has continued its effort to link more closely with multilateral institutions that are current or prospective members of the Group of Friends. Meetings were held with representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the African Union and the Organization of American States (OAS). Memorandums of understanding were signed or extended with UNESCO, FAO, OAS and the African Union.

National and regional strategies

23. National strategies reflect a commitment by countries to generate an internal process for ownership of the Alliance's goals. Moreover, they are mechanisms for exchanging lessons learned regarding cultural diversity and challenges, including identity-based tensions. To date, 28 Member States have submitted national strategies. While these remain important expressions of commitment to the principles of the Alliance, they are inconsistent in their nature and application. Some detail past achievements and others set aspirational goals, but very few mention any mechanism for implementation. Some contain outdated information, with no process in place for annual revisions or updates. Only Member States can address these challenges and ground their national plans in concrete action.

24. The Alliance has also called upon groups of countries facing shared challenges to generate common actions through the creation of regional strategies. Such strategies encourage a dynamic partnership among relevant regional organizations and stakeholders, including Member States, civil society organizations and the private sector, with regard to Alliance-related activities. This can be achieved

through an open forum for discussion and enhanced regional cooperation on activities pertinent to the Alliance's mandate. To date, regional strategies have been adopted for the Mediterranean region, South-Eastern Europe and Latin America. In 2014, the League of Arab States adopted the Unified Arab Strategy for Dialogue of Civilizations. Austria has launched consultations regarding a Danube River regional initiative, as part of a broader aspiration to link Central Europe with Central Asia. The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is working with various Member States in the African region to interest them in closely cooperating with the Alliance by joining the Group of Friends, hosting an international conference or implementing projects.

25. The methods used to achieve the aims of the regional strategies are evolving on the basis of the experience of the Alliance's work in that area to date. The High Representative is committed to guiding Member States in developing and implementing regional strategies, and to continuing coordination with regional and subregional organizations in this regard, on the basis of the role that these entities can play in the maintenance of peace and security, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Public-private partnerships

26. In 2013, the Alliance acknowledged the increased need to engage the private sector, both as a source of funding to augment the contributions of Member States and as a source of substantive assistance. It initially addressed this issue in its report entitled "Doing business in a multicultural world: challenges and opportunities", issued jointly with the Global Compact in 2009.

27. Since July 2013, the Alliance has taken steps to expand the range of its private sector relationships. One example is the deepening collaboration with the BMW Group. A partnership agreement for 2014-2015 was signed with the BMW Group in September 2013, providing increased funding for the Alliance.

28. In 2013, the Alliance established a partnership with the Swiss company EF Education First, a global leader in the fields of language education and international student exchanges. In August 2013, through its partnership with EF Education First, the Alliance expanded its summer school project and was also able to move it to New York for the first time. Building on the success of that project, the agreement with EF Education First is being extended through the end of 2015.

29. In 2011, the Alliance, together with UNESCO, launched the public relations campaign entitled "Do one thing for diversity and inclusion". Developed to enhance the profile of World Diversity Day, it was carried out in collaboration with private sector partners, including Dell, Pfizer, Deloitte, Intuit, Johnson and Johnson, and Sodexo. Having completed this project, the Alliance has been in communication with UNESCO to ensure that future efforts to support World Diversity Day are complementary and collaborative in order to maximize the benefit of this important occasion for coexistence and understanding among cultures and nations.

Strengthening links within the United Nations system

30. The need for greater policy coherence has been identified after six years of reporting to the General Assembly. Collaboration between the Alliance's staff and the rest of the Secretariat, particularly among the operative departments and the

relevant entities of the specialized agencies, is well under way. Since the High Representative started his tenure and operations at Headquarters, he has expressed his clear intention to emphasize a new culture of mainstreaming Alliance efforts throughout the United Nations system. However, developing these institutional relationships requires time and effort that must extend beyond the current reporting period and will continue for some time to come.

31. The effort that began in 2013 to develop these institutional relationships through more interaction with the United Nations system is a priority for the High Representative. As previously reported, meetings have been held with the Department of Political Affairs, especially its Policy and Mediation Division, the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Joint programming has already been launched, in particular, with UNDP and the Peacebuilding Support Office.

32. During the past year, Alliance staff increased their engagement with the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, an organization it joined in 2009, which consists of over 40 United Nations entities whose work is relevant to youth. The Alliance is also part of the working group that focuses on youth and peacebuilding. During the reporting period, the Alliance contributed to the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding, launched in April 2014, and to an operational guidance document that is under development. The operational guidance document will reflect good practices from the field, including those generated via youth projects funded by the Alliance. Select youth project coordinators from the Alliance's Youth Solidarity Fund project have been invited as field level experts to contribute to consultations at the United Nations with regard to the work of the youth and peacebuilding group.

33. At the invitation of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Government of the Philippines, the Alliance provided a representative to participate in a mission to Mindanao, the Philippines, and contributed to an assessment of the humanitarian situation there and relevant aspects of the peace process.

34. During the reporting period, Alliance personnel were invited by Division of Public Affairs staff to work with them in advising a group of faith-based non-governmental organizations seeking to establish a network of practitioners engaging in interreligious approaches applicable to conflict settings. Alliance staff were also invited by UNDP to participate in and contribute to inter-agency deliberations regarding the issue of culture and development, as part of the post-2015 planning process.

35. On another aspect of engagement with the United Nations system, the High Representative is now convening periodic meetings at Headquarters at the ambassadorial level that include not only members of the Alliance's Group of Friends, but also the media and civil society, as well as Member States and organizations that are not members of the Group. This kind of interaction has proved to be useful for the image and visibility of the Alliance.

Non-State and civil society network

36. In its various programme areas, the Alliance ensures that non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors are invited to take an active part in its projects, initiatives and events. Along with education, youth, migration and media, the four pillars of its mandate, the Alliance engages additional non-State actors that work in the areas of sustainable development, sports, the arts and entertainment, counter-terrorism and mediation. Noteworthy events that the Alliance organized during the reporting period, in collaboration with non-State actors, included:

(a) A meeting with the Committee of Religious Non-Governmental Organizations entitled "World interfaith harmony: vital for peace and development" (February 2014);

(b) A meeting with a coalition of civil society organizations focused on supporting the mission of the Alliance at the national, regional and global levels entitled "Unity in diversity — world civil society" (February 2014);

(c) The World Sports Values Summit for Peace and Development, with World Faiths Development Dialogue, Worldwide Support for Development and the International Sports Promotion Society (May 2014).

37. As we approach 2015, the Alliance plans to continue to promote respect for the importance of the issue of culture and development for the post-2015 development planning agenda, working with civil society partner organizations to advance that goal. The Alliance is still of the view that a stable and peaceful environment for all is conducive to human rights and development.

Global Forums

38. Acting as a global platform, the Alliance convenes periodic Global Forums, where its stakeholders and partners aim to advance the conversation on building dialogue and understanding across cultures and religions. From 2008 to 2013, the Forums were held in Madrid; Istanbul, Turkey; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Doha; and Vienna, at the generous initiative of the host Governments of Spain, Turkey, Brazil, Qatar and Austria.

39. The 2014 Global Forum is scheduled to take place in Bali in August, and will be hosted by the Government of Indonesia. Its theme will be "Unity in diversity: celebrating diversity for common and shared values". Up to 1,500 participants representing State and non-State actors are expected to attend. Plenary and breakout sessions will address the following issues:

(a) Promoting harmony through interreligious and cross-cultural dialogue;

(b) The role of women in fostering understanding among cultures;

(c) Fostering understanding through the power of sports, art, music and entertainment;

(d) Youth participation in peace-building;

(e) Media conversation across lines;

(f) Harnessing the positive power of social media in reconciling the demands of security and the right to privacy as well as freedom of expression;

(g) Social inclusion and migration: developments for the post-2015 agenda;

(h) The perception of migration: how to change the narratives about migrants.

40. As part of the Global Forum in Bali, the Alliance is organizing a youth event for 100 international and local youth and will accommodate 10 side events led by its partners.

IV. Alliance of Civilizations initiatives and activities

41. In accordance with the strategic review document for 2013-2018, a programme management unit was established in the Alliance of Civilizations office. This unit was formed to enhance management of various projects and initiatives. An initial step in aligning project management with international standards was to ensure that the personnel managing projects shared similar roles and responsibilities. The next step will be to strengthen their project management skills and provide them with various tools and resources available within and outside the United Nations system.

42. With the team of project management specialists almost all in place, the Alliance office is moving towards shared project management responsibilities, rather than continuing the ad hoc approach used previously. This will ensure greater synergies among projects, support the development of innovative ideas and facilitate the generation of data that can more efficiently inform policy development and advocacy. Lastly, this approach will reduce the human and financial burden of project management.

43. In November and December 2013, as part of the work of the programme management unit, an initial monitoring and evaluation framework was developed and tested with a number of projects supported by the Youth Solidarity Fund. This framework is now being refined and will be applied to all projects and initiatives of the Alliance. As a complement to this, an impact assessment model is being developed that will be tested with a view to supporting the proper design of new projects and initiatives.

44. Related to the impact assessment model, a project review process has been developed in order to prevent the duplication or spreading thin of efforts within the team and the sector. The project review process includes the need to consider various exit strategies, among them outsourcing, transfer and reorganization.

45. As of June 2014, a number of projects were placed on hold owing to the reduced availability of financial and human resources, specifically, the "Education about religions and beliefs" clearing house and the global experts database. In addition, discussions are underway with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on the future of the project entitled "Online community on migration and integration — building inclusive societies" and the question of the proper organization to host it.

A. Education field of action

Media and Information Literacy Initiative

46. The Alliance maintains a media and information literacy web-based clearinghouse (www.aocmedialiteracy.org), which was developed in partnership with UNESCO. It has become the unique thematic platform on media and information literacy within the United Nations system. In 2014, the clearinghouse was further developed by the inclusion of the multilingual and interactive version of the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers on the Alliance website (www.unaoc.org/mil-for-teachers).

47. The University Network on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue is another initiative that the Alliance developed in partnership with UNESCO. In 2014, it has continued to grow regionally: the original members of the network have further developed their own regional networks, thereby fulfilling the aim of creating a hub of networks for media and information literacy-related resources and initiatives. The University Network will hold its third global conference, hosted by Tsinghua University, in Beijing, in September 2014. At this event, the Network's second publication, produced with support from the Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research, will be presented.

48. The Alliance continued to provide expertise and support to media and information literacy-related events. Specifically, from July 2013 to June 2014, it organized two national-level workshops for educators, in Morocco and Egypt. Alliance staff also participated in the European Media and Information Literacy Forum, in Paris, and the Media and Learning conference, in Brussels.

Fellowship programme

49. The Alliance held two fellowship sessions over the course of 2013. In late June 2013, 12 fellows from North Africa and the Middle East participated in a programme that included meetings in New York, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Berlin, Brussels and Paris over a period of two weeks. The fellows, ranging in age from 28 to 38 years, were from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and the State of Palestine. The agenda included meetings with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of France and Germany, the Spokesperson of the Chancellor of Germany, the State Department of the United States, the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It also included meetings with Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, Leonard Lauder, Chair Emeritus of the Estée Lauder Companies, and Simon Xavier Guerrand-Hermès, Chair of the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace).

50. The second fellowship session was held for two weeks in November 2013. The 12 fellows, from North America and Europe, participated in a programme that included meetings in Jordan, Morocco and Qatar. The fellows, ranging in age from 28 to 38 years, were from Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain and the United States. Their agenda included meetings with officials of the All Jordan Youth Commission, members of the Moroccan Parliament, British Council students from universities in Casablanca and Fez, Morocco, local non-governmental organizations in Morocco and Qatar, political activists, and journalists from Al Jazeera.

51. In addition to these classes, the Alliance of Civilizations invited 10 alumni of the fellowship programme to New York in October 2013 to develop an engagement strategy and identify tangible deliverables for 2013-2015. Their proposed action plan represents the commitment of fellowship programme alumni to advance the mission of the Alliance, in a spirit of service.

B. Media field of action

Hate speech project

52. In October 2013, the Alliance designed a project entitled "Tracking hatred: intolerance and hate speech in European, Middle Eastern and North African media". The goal is to understand and combat the harmful effects of hate speech and intolerant ideas that develop and spread through the media, specifically in Europe and the Middle East and North Africa region. The two components of the project are: (a) the launch of a comprehensive study of the media in three countries in the Middle East and North Africa [and three in Europe; and (b) the subsequent implementation of a series of activities and supplementary projects to raise awareness about the problem and provide possible solutions.

53. During the reporting period, the Alliance actively sought to secure funding and partnerships through continued consultations with existing and potential partners. The project also underwent an internal review to make it more appealing to potential funders and partners. Potential partners identified to date include the Thomson Foundation, the Ethical Journalism Network, the Open Society Foundations, CNN International, the Global Editors Network and the Evens Foundation. Several potential partners have expressed interest, including the Evens Foundation and the Ethical Journalism Network. The active phase of implementation and the timeline will be decided once partners are confirmed and funding is secured.

PLURAL+ youth video festival

54. PLURAL+ is a youth video festival focused on migration, diversity and social inclusion. It is implemented by the Alliance in close cooperation with IOM. To date, this activity has been supported by 33 partner organizations that contribute in-kind resources and expertise.

55. In 2013, over 250 applicants from 72 countries sent their videos, out of which 25 were selected by the international jury and PLURAL+ partner organizations. The selected videos were presented at the awards ceremony at the Paley Centre for Media, in New York, in December 2013.

56. Since December 2013, winning videos have been shown on a variety of platforms across the world, including broadcasts in Latin America and Europe and screenings in Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, France, India, Italy, Jordan, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Serbia, Spain, Turkey and the United States. It is estimated that, through television broadcasts, the Internet and public screenings, PLURAL+ videos have been viewed by over 100,000 people. PLURAL+ was also highlighted at the SIGNIS conference in Rome in February 2014.

57. The Alliance, in partnership with Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York, produced a publication entitled *Youth Media Visions*, which documents youth voices collected through the PLURAL+ festival. It was one of the outputs of

the 2013 symposium of the same name, on youth-produced media and education, co-organized by the Alliance and Teachers College.

"Storytelling Somalia" training programme

58. "Storytelling Somalia" is an experimental project of the Alliance that will bring together diaspora Somali journalists from different tribes and regions of the country to address the issue of the narratives that are used by journalists and filter back into Somali society. The goal of the project is to contribute to the combating of violent extremism by providing diaspora journalists, many of whom are untrained, with exposure to best practices in the construction of unbiased, informed narratives that can prevent further exacerbation of the conflict.

59. Preparations for the training programme are ongoing. Post selection, trainees will be given an opportunity to provide their own input on the substance of the training programme itself. In addition, a weekly online videocast from the organizers will be sent to the trainees in the weeks leading up to the training programme to familiarize them with both the trainers and the training materials.

60. An expected output of the training programme will be a shared website for the trainees that will be rolled out after the completion of the programme. Additional outputs will include proposed projects from diaspora European and North American trainees for engagement with journalists and others in the Horn of Africa region and Kenya. The major donors to this project are the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and the Government of Australia.

C. Migration field of action

61. The Alliance, in partnership with the Panos Institute and with the support of the Open Society Foundations, produced a media-friendly glossary on migration. The glossary will be launched at the Global Forum in Bali.

62. The glossary provides easy-to-understand definitions of 97 terms as well as situational examples designed to help the international media improve coverage of migration-related issues. The glossary's content was written by a scientific committee and reviewed by an editorial committee. The scientific committee consisted of partners from several international organizations specializing in migration issues: IOM, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Labour Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, Terre des Hommes and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The editorial committee was made up of journalists from noted international news outlets including *The Guardian* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*. The glossary is based on one of 17 recommendations that resulted from the seminars entitled "Covering migration: challenges met and unmet", on how the media reports on migration, which were held in 2013 in France and Switzerland.

D. Youth field of action

Youth Solidarity Fund 2013

63. During the 2013 edition of the Youth Solidarity Fund project, the Alliance selected 17 youth-led organizations from the Middle East, North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Project activities started in July 2013 and continued through February 2014.

64. While each youth-led project was unique in its design and included objectives tailored to the specific needs of the local community and the attendant ethnic or religious tensions on the ground, they all shared a certain number of common elements. Specifically, their activities addressed young adults between the ages of 18 and 35, and they originated in and were for the benefit of local communities and contained very strong capacity-building components. Activities included awareness-raising campaigns, using media and advocacy, for local governments and religious leaders. All the projects aimed to have impacts on policy at the local level. They were output-oriented and sought to ensure that their products, including brochures, manuals, textbooks, leaflets, DVDs and audio recordings, would be sustainably applied for the benefit of the local community beyond the project duration. Furthermore, whenever applicable and relevant, youth clubs were registered or partnership agreements between youth-led organizations and other partners, such as memorandums of understanding with universities, police authorities or schools, were concluded in an effort to institutionalize relations and bring more ownership and sustainability to the projects.

65. From July 2013 to February 2014, over 29,000 young people and adults directly benefited from projects supported through the Youth Solidarity Fund. The project beneficiaries attended workshops or training sessions, and directly engaged in the production of manuals and recordings. At the same time, up to 600,000 youth and adults became indirect beneficiaries of the projects, receiving awareness-raising materials, observing sports activities and theatrical performances, attending screenings and listening to radio programmes produced by youth.

66. The Alliance provided technical support to each youth-led organization by reviewing awareness-raising materials and substantive documents and providing regular consultations with coordinators as projects were implemented in the context of the resurgence of violence or the occurrence of natural disasters. The Alliance hired a public relations firm to support the communication needs of the youth-led organizations, focusing on stories and achievements that would be of interest to media outlets, updating social media and websites and conducting one-on-one consultations with coordinators to improve their communications strategies.

67. In November and December 2013, Alliance staff conducted monitoring and evaluation visits to select locations where Youth Solidarity Fund projects were being implemented, with a view to observing, providing guidance and measuring progress made towards the attainment of project results. Staff held informational interviews with project coordinators and management, beneficiaries of projects and relevant stakeholders on such themes as project relevance, feasibility, outputs, outcomes, expected impact, effectiveness, reporting and the financial value of their projects.

68. One of the key findings of the monitoring visits was the need to provide further capacity-building to organizations with projects supported through the Youth

Solidarity Fund. This capacity-building would cover both project-related activities across their organizations and the corporate needs of the organizations. Building on these findings, in February 2014 in Istanbul, the Alliance organized a training session for 30 Youth Solidarity Fund alumni from the 2008, 2010 and 2013 editions. Youth delegates were trained on: organizational development and decision-making processes within their governance structures; gender mainstreaming into their organizational structures and programming; the principles and approaches of monitoring and evaluation in programmes dealing with culture and social issues, with a focus on impact assessment, methodology and tools; financial sustainability from the perspective of social enterprise; the mapping of donors; and the importance of the proper message and of showcasing results in fundraising efforts.

"Entrepreneurs for social change" project

69. The Alliance continued to partner with Fondazione CRT and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy for the second edition of a project entitled "Entrepreneurs for social change" (formerly known as "Young Euro-Med entrepreneurs in interculturality"), aimed at broadening the project and its range of activities compared with 2013.

70. The overall goal of the project is to empower youth in order to reduce marginalization and build inclusive societies through social enterprises. This goal contributes to the aim of fostering socioeconomic development in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The project includes three main components: (a) a week-long training programme tackling conflict prevention as well as business planning and management; (b) a nine-month period of mentoring by experts in the field; and (c) an online platform for exchanges with peers and potential partners. The methodology of the training will focus on applied work guided by experts and will include peer-assist sessions in which the young participants help each other generate solutions to shared problems.

71. In October 2014, 20 young social entrepreneurs will be part of the programme, aspiring to create positive social change in their communities by reducing tensions linked to cultural and religious diversity, while also generating employment. Their selection was made through an open call for applications, which was launched on 2 June.

72. The young entrepreneurs from the 2013 and 2014 editions are part of the Alliance alumni network, where trainers, mentors and peers exchange lessons learned and practical tools linked to both the business and social aspects of the social enterprises supported by the "Entrepreneurs for social change" project.

73. Finally, the Alliance and its partners are working on forming a fund to support the most successful entrepreneurs among the participants and to transform the alumni network into an incubator for social enterprises, thus bringing social entrepreneurship and economic empowerment to marginalized communities around the Mediterranean region.

Summer schools

74. In August 2013, the Alliance partnered with EF Education First to organize the latest edition of the Alliance's summer school entitled "Skills for global citizenship", held in Tarrytown, the United States. A total of 100 young people,

representing 97 countries, were selected to take part in workshops on negotiation, advocacy and social media for social change. A total of 27 speakers, trainers and facilitators contributed to the programme.

75. A highlight of the summer school was a visit to the United Nations, where participants engaged with the Deputy Secretary-General and other United Nations officials. Participants increased their understanding of other cultures and faiths and gained applicable tools for growing and sustaining their impact as activists, journalists, change makers and leaders in their communities. They also walked away having built a network of like-minded individuals for joint action on pressing challenges. During the survey, 96 per cent of participants indicated that the content was useful and improved their skills.

76. In August 2014, building on the extended partnership with EF Education First, the Alliance will hold a second summer school under the theme "Youth for change". A total of 75 young people from 75 countries, representing a diverse array of faiths and cultures, have already been selected as participants. They will engage in workshops focused on reducing stereotypes, addressing identity-based tensions and building alliances through the use of concrete tools. In line with the Alliance's approach of recognizing youth expertise in peacebuilding and social change, 50 per cent of the selected trainers and facilitators are aged between 18 and 35 years.

E. Innovation and campaigns

Intercultural Innovation Award

77. In 2011, the Alliance and the BMW Group launched the "BMW Group Award for Intercultural Innovation, in support of the Alliance of Civilizations, under the auspices of the United Nations" (otherwise known as the Intercultural Innovation Award). The Award is given to innovative and sustainable projects around the world that encourage dialogue, promote intercultural understanding and contribute to prosperity and peace. Through this partnership, the Alliance and the BMW Group provide their respective expertise, time and resources to ensure the sustainable growth of each supported project. The Alliance and the BMW Group have renewed their partnership through the end of 2015.

78. The Alliance and the BMW Group mobilized financial and organizational resources to support 10 projects that won the 2013 Award. The projects, which originated in Australia, Canada, Hungary, Kenya, India, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, the Philippines and the State of Palestine, touched on issues related to youth, migration and integration, intercultural awareness, education, arts, the media and information technology.

79. In addition to a total prize pool of $100,000, the Alliance provided technical support to the awardees, including training and capacity-building programmes, customized support and mentoring, recognition, visibility and membership.

80. Through the assessment exercise, it was noted that one year after winning the Award, 9 out of 10 organizations had consolidated their work and considerably expanded their operations. The total number of project beneficiaries rose from 117,620 in 2012 to 219,348 in April 2014, representing an increase of 148 per cent.

81. In January 2014, the Alliance launched a new application process, which resulted in 605 applications received from over 100 countries, covering all continents. Applications are being assessed by an international jury of experts, and the results will be presented at the Global Forum in Bali.

AppPEACE

82. Building on the success of the "Create UNAOC" initiative of 2012-2013, the Alliance has partnered with UNDP to launch, in August 2014, the initiative appPEACE, a global competition that will provide an opportunity to identify and promote mobile applications and games developed as venues for raising awareness and facilitating intercultural understanding and, as a result, promoting conflict prevention. Taking into consideration that in some parts of the world it is easier to access the Internet via smartphones than it is to access clean water or sanitation facilities, appPEACE is aimed at to facilitating the distribution of applications and games that promote a culture of peace. In addition to UNDP, other partners in this project include the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the organization Games for Change.

F. Alumni programming

83. As recommended in the strategic review document for 2013-2018, beneficiaries of the Alliance's programmes in the areas of youth, the media, education, migration and cross-sector initiatives should be brought together in one network to share expertise, develop joint projects and maximize the impact of their work aimed at fostering cross-cultural understanding and cooperation.

84. As a follow-up, in December 2013, the Alliance and its partner the BMW Group launched an online platform entitled "Intercultural Leaders". The platform is designed to enable the Alliance's alumni to share knowledge and tools, and interact in a live format. As of June 2014, close to 300 alumni of PLURAL+, the Intercultural Innovation Award, the Youth Solidarity Fund, the fellowship programme and the "Entrepreneurs for social change" project, as well as professionals from partner organizations and a group of mentors, had joined the alumni network.

V. Outreach and communications

85. All projects and initiatives that the Alliance implements with its partners drive the organization's outreach and communications efforts. These activities and projects target grass-roots organizations, journalists, youth and participants in the fellowship programme, and rely on global campaigns to ensure greater engagement and visibility. The Alliance's global forums are the premier events that serve as the main global platform for cross-cultural dialogue, eliciting international media coverage throughout the world.

86. Starting in 2014, the periodic meetings of the Group of Friends convened in New York were opened to civil society organizations and the media. They are now webcast live by United Nations Television, increasing the Alliance's visibility and outreach within the United Nations system and beyond. 87. During the official

missions of the High Representative, keynote statements and lectures at renowned academic institutions and other intellectual centres generated interest from various print, radio and television media outlets, including BBC radio, BBC TV, RAI TV, Al Jazeera, *L'Espresso*, *Asharq Al-Awsat*, *Al-Watan* and *Al Raya*, which conducted one-on-one interviews with the High Representative.

87. Furthermore, on various occasions, round-table discussions with journalists were organized to highlight the work and mission of the Alliance. Such activities were augmented through the regular press releases and media advisories sent by the Alliance media team through the network of United Nations accredited journalists and beyond.

VI. Governance: Voluntary Trust Fund and staffing

88. In spite of the Alliance's crucial role and expanded activities, the resources at its disposal continued to be extremely limited and quite insufficient compared with the target level. In addition, incoming financial resources are almost impossible to predict. Over the past few years, non-earmarked (core operations) funding has continued to trend sharply downwards, whereas earmarked (project-based) funding has increased. The reduction in non-earmarked funds results in an inability to plan strategically or engage in exploratory efforts to identify new activities, and therefore leaves the Alliance in a reactive posture, dependent on the immediate, sometimes momentary, interests of individual donors.

89. For the 2013 budgetary year, actual expenditures were kept at $4.1 million. Appeals to continue support for the Alliance's Voluntary Trust Fund were made through formal letters from the High Representative, in February 2014, and the Secretary-General, in June 2014.

90. Staffing was maintained at a level consistent with that in 2013. The extension of partnerships with private sector entities has allowed for a certain level of flexibility in the use of funds committed by those entities, particularly in providing adequate personnel support.

91. Additionally, the High Representative is in the process of evaluating the current Partners Assembly structure, seeking to create smaller and more strategic formations of Member States in the Group of Friends for regular advisory consultations. He is also considering the establishment of an advisory board that would consist of members from the private sector, academia and civil society.

VII. Conclusion

92. In 2013, the High Representative focused on the process of the consolidation and strengthening of the Alliance of Civilizations, building on the accomplishments of past years, while identifying areas in which the Alliance's operations and management could be improved and exploring new priorities. This culminated in the strategic review document for 2013-2018, which was endorsed by the Group of Friends in September 2013. While this process was taking place, the staff continued to implement activities and programmes. The process of consolidation will continue beyond the current reporting period as the High Representative continues to find an appropriate balance of activities.

93. The Alliance's increased effort to mainstream into the Secretariat was well received. Institutional links were strengthened where possible and constructed where necessary. Ad hoc relationships were reviewed and, where possible, developed into genuine institutional links. Efforts to build collaborative opportunities among the small staff of the Alliance increased, and a greater number of joint operations took place.

94. Additional attention has been paid to the need to improve project management techniques and processes, including a new level of attention to the effective monitoring and assessment of programming activities. Training for staff was to take place in the second half of 2014, and a new initiative review process, to properly evaluate project and event proposals, has been established. In this respect, the Alliance's efforts to increase internal discipline, focus and coherence will be essential.

95. The Alliance continues to seek adequate, regular, reliable and predictable sources of replenishment for its Voluntary Trust Fund. While efforts to improve relationships with the private sector are being made, the Alliance must also be regularly supported by the Member States. Private sector funding can only augment, not replace, such support.